

Delaware DOJ Warns Delawareans About Fraudulent Fundraising Calls For Injured Police Officers

The Consumer Protection Unit of the Delaware Department of Justice warns Delawareans to be wary of potentially unauthorized and fraudulent telephone solicitations involving the “Disabled Police Officers Fund” supposedly on behalf of disabled police officers.

The calls display a local (302) area code, and the callers request donations to the “Disabled Police Officers Fund,” which they claim raises funds to provide services for police officers. There is no known charitable organization registered under “Disabled Police Officers Fund” in Delaware or with the IRS Exempt Organization Division.

Delaware law requires callers to supply you with certain information, including:

- Whether they are a paid fundraiser;
- Where they are calling from, including company name and location;
- The charity for which the funds are being raised;
- The amount of the consumer’s donation that will actually go to the charity;
- If the charitable solicitation is on behalf of an individual(s) or their family, whether the party soliciting you has permission from the individual(s) or their family to make use of that person’s name, picture or likeness in their charitable solicitations; and
- If they are calling on behalf of police, fire or law enforcement, they must either be an actual law enforcement employee or have written permission from a state, county, or local first responder organization to make the call.

The Consumer Protection Unit reminds you to never give your credit card or bank account information in response to one of these calls. Someone calling you to make a legitimate telephone solicitation on behalf of any charitable organization should be willing to mail you a written donation form and envelope to mail in a pledge.

You can make sure a charity is legitimate by visiting the Better Business Bureau at www.bbb.org, Charity Navigator at www.charitynavigator.org, or the American Institute of Philanthropy at www.charitywatch.org where you can view lists of verified charities. For online donations, ensure that the solicitation website and the purported charity match and that the website is secure.

Anyone who suspects they have been scammed or have received a suspicious solicitation, the Attorney General encourages donors to call the Attorney General’s toll-free Consumer Hotline at 1-800-220-5424 or email the Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Unit at consumer.protection@state.de.us.